

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 OMB-01 /128 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7973

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2697

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, EG, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI VIEW OF EGYPTIAN WAR TALK AND GOVERNMENT SHUFFLE

1. MIDDLE EAST DIRECTOR VERED OF MFA TOOK CAUTIOUS VIEW WITH EMBOFF APRIL 4 OF SADAT'S RECENT THREATS BUT FELT ON BALANCE THAT EGYPTIAN RESUMPTION OF SHOOTING WAS UNLIKELY. WHILE NOTING THAT ARAB LEADERS CAN EASILY BE CAPTIVATED BY OWN RHETORIC, MRS VERED THOUGHT THAT SADAT WOULD NOT DARE OVERRULE EGYPTIAN MILITARY LEADERS AND THAT MILITARY LEADERS, KNOWING EGYPT IS CONSIDERABLY WEAKER THAN YEAR AGO BECAUSE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM IS LACKING BOTH SOVIET OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AND SOVIET SUPERVISION OF MAINTENANCE, WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND AGAINST A MILITARY INITIATIVE.

2. MRS VERED TOLD EMBOFF SHE SERIOUSLY DOUBTED THAT SYRIA

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WOULD REACT FAVORABLY TO ANY SADAT PROPOSAL OF RESUMED SHOOTING ALONG CANAL IF CAIRO WAS REQUESTING COORDINATED FORAYS OUT OF SYRIA-- EVEN IF LIMITED TO EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT STATIONED IN SYRIA. ALMOST UNINTERRUPTED QUIET ALONG ISRAEL- SYRIA CEASEFIRE LINE SINCE JANUARY 8 SHOWED THAT DAMASCUS REALLY HAD LEARNED LESSON FROM ISRAELI RAID THAT DATE AND MIGHT EVEN LEAD SYRIANS TO QUESTION WISDOM OF ANY EGYPTIAN RESUMPTION OF SHOOTING UNLESS THIS WAS PART OF SOME WELL- CONCEIVED EGYPTIAN PLAN WITH GOOD PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS.

3. MRS VERED SPECULATED THAT QADHAFI MIGHT SOMEHOW HAVE BEEN BEHIND RECENT EGYPTIAN WAR TALK. BUT SHE TOOK BREVITY OF SADAT' S VISIT TO LIBYA AS PROBABLY INDICATING CAIRO- TRIPOLI DIFFERENCES, WHICH WOULD FURTHER REDUCE LIKELIHOOD THAT SADAT IS ABOUT TO START MILITARY ACTION.

4. AS FOR NEW EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT AND SADAT' S ASSUMPTION OF ADDITIONAL POWERS, MRS VERED WAS CERTAIN BONEFRH HWNW XSCEMS### AND DID NOT REFLECT ANY MILITARY PLANNING. SHE SAID EGYPTIAN WRITERS' CONDEMNATION OF EGYPT' S DRIFTING POLICIES IN JANUARY, AGAINST BACKGROUND OF GENERAL DISSATISFACTION WITH REGIME AMONG EDUCATED EGYPTIAN, MUST HAVE BEEN STINGING REBUFF TO SADAT, CONVINCING HIM HE MUST BOTH TRY TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT AND AT SAME TIME BATTEN DOWN HATCHES FOR FURTHER DOMESTIC UNREST IN CASE THIS UNSUCCESSFUL.

ZURHELLEN

NOTE BY OC/ T: AS RECEIVED. SERVICED UPON REQUEST.

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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